

*IN MEMORY OF MONTROSE MADISON WOLF*

JAMES A. SHERMAN

UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS

Mont Wolf, our valued colleague and very good friend, passed away several months ago. Mont was a very private man, and the services for him were held at the family ranch in Texas. Sandra, Mont's wife, said that the very best type of memorial for Mont was one that had already been held while he was with us in the fall of 2003—a celebration of the careers and accomplishments of Mont and of Todd Risley, who, together, helped define the field of applied behavior analysis. At that time, their current and former students and colleagues gathered from all around the country in a collective roast and expression of gratitude and affection for Mont and Todd. It was a wonderful occasion.

Mont Wolf was one of the great pioneers and innovators in applied behavior analysis. In his early work at the University of Washington, he explored how principles of learning, largely formulated on the basis of laboratory work, might actually be used to make significant changes in the developing behaviors of children, both those with developmental disabilities and those who were typically developing. He modeled for us how to adapt existing experimental procedures and create new ones to address applied problems such as teaching children to walk, to talk, and to interact appropriately with others. His work with Dicky, a young child with autism, was the first systematic and widespread use of behavioral procedures to modify the pervasive developmental deficits of a child with autism. This study substantially and positively changed the entire course of

Dicky's subsequent development. This study also set the occasion for the development of effective interventions in problems of autism and provided the model for applied interventions in a wide variety of childhood disorders.

Later, after Mont came to the University of Kansas, he worked extensively on the challenges facing children from low-income families who did not have the skills to be successful in school. He addressed the classic problems of developing more effective language skills, reading abilities, computational skills, and the social behaviors the children needed to get along with others in a variety of settings. Perhaps the work for which he is best known is his leadership in developing the Teaching-Family Model, a comprehensive community intervention program for delinquent and predelinquent youth. This program was not only remarkably effective but it also incorporated within it a replication system, much like that of cell division, that helped to produce the development of literally hundreds of Teaching-Family intervention programs for troubled youth in communities throughout the United States as well as in other countries. In addition, there have been numerous adaptations of the procedures utilized in the Teaching-Family Model for the treatment of children with autism, adults with developmental disabilities, and people with mental illness. Thus, Mont's efforts directly affected thousands of people throughout the world. For all of this Mont was widely recognized. He was the recipient of Research Achievement awards from the University of Kansas; he received awards from the Society for the Advancement of Behavior Analysis, from Boys' Town, from the Teaching Family Associa-

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Address correspondence to the author at the Department of Applied Behavioral Science, University of Kansas, 1000 Sunnyside Ave., Lawrence, Kansas 66045.

tion, from the California Association for Behavior Analysis, and from the American Psychological Association. Perhaps most noteworthy, he was selected by his peers as the very first editor of the *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis* at the ripe old age of 32 years old.

A listing of Mont's professional achievements, however, is insufficient to acknowledge his effect on the world. Mont had qualities that made him unique. He was a hard-nosed scientist. And, he was a tenderhearted humanist. He was, in truth, a sheep in wolf's clothing. This combination of qualities made him and his work extraordinarily effective. He cared deeply about the things that were important to people, the things that troubled them, the things that caused pain in their lives. He cared just as deeply about being effective in helping ameliorate those problems and that pain, about adhering to believable and acceptable standards of evidence for effectiveness, and, most importantly, in doing it in a way so that others could follow the same path. For Mont, the effects of people's environment on their behavior was not just a matter of intellectual curiosity, it was a matter of life. And, in this matter of life, he was courageous and he was relentless. For Mont, no behavioral problem was too difficult to address, sometimes requiring many different attempts in many different ways, and no solution was adequate unless the affected people were largely satisfied with it and the solution was documented and detailed in a way so that others could do what Mont had done first. The amazing and wonderful thing is that he was

successful so many times and taught us all so much in the process.

That was the past, which was an extraordinary record of accomplishment and influence. What of the future? Although predicting the future is, at best, a fool's endeavor, we can be confident of at least two things. First, we will miss Mont. There is no question of this. We will miss him as a stimulating and supportive colleague, as a good friend, and as model of courage, intellectually and personally. Second, what Mont did will continue to have profoundly positive effects on our lives and those of our students. Of this we also may be sure. As part of a class exercise in his course on applied behavior analysis, Steve Fawcett asked his students to comment, in writing, on one of the most important issues in applied research that Mont addressed, the issue of social validity. One student wrote,

Social validity is truly the most important construct in Applied Behavior Analysis for me. I entered into this school and field in hopes of making a difference in the lives of others. Social validity was the pull.

Another student wrote,

The concept of social validity . . . is a model for caring, for compassion. It is not enough to do research—we need to find out what matters to others—it is about changing the conditions for others to thrive and this is a tool to discern what's needed in that process.

Mont's influence will continue to live.